



SR0157

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Illinois barns are witnesses to the role of agriculture in our State's image and its economy and serve as scenic landmarks for residents and visitors alike; and

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WHEREAS, Historic barns and agricultural structures across rural Illinois symbolize important Illinois values of heritage, hard work, productivity, and closeness to the land and community with the people who built them; and

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WHEREAS, Historic barns uphold the historic rural qualities of the State's landscape, along with providing a picturesque atmosphere for the State's citizens and visitors to enjoy; and

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WHEREAS, These structures provide insight into our distinctive agricultural history and heritage, as well as a visual description of rural life, both past and present, in Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, Local historic preservation and community organizations in at least 10 counties across Illinois highlight local barns with organized or self-guided barn tours, the first of which began in Greene County in 1984 and has continued every September since as part of Greene County Days; and

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1           WHEREAS, One private Illinois barn preservation  
2 organization, the Illinois Barn Alliance, released a statewide  
3 survey in August, 2005, and found that residents in 46 Illinois  
4 counties have conducted barn surveys, organized barn tours, or  
5 engaged in other activities that directly promote historic  
6 barns; and

7           WHEREAS, While historic barns are cherished by so many  
8 Illinois residents and visitors, many barns can no longer  
9 produce the necessary income to prevent damage by decay or  
10 demolition, or the barns become threatened when the surrounding  
11 land is removed from active agricultural use; and

12           WHEREAS, Many states, including Iowa, Wisconsin, New York,  
13 Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire enacted legislation creating  
14 barn preservation and restoration programs to assist barn  
15 owners with their efforts to preserve these cultural and  
16 architectural treasures for the enjoyment and economic benefit  
17 of this and future generations; therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL  
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the Department of  
20 Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), in consultation with  
21 the Department of Agriculture, the Illinois Historic  
22 Preservation Agency, and any other public entities as the DCEO

1 deems necessary, shall conduct a study of (i) current historic  
2 barn restoration and preservation efforts and needs in  
3 Illinois, (ii) the benefits that a historic barn restoration  
4 and preservation program in Illinois could have on tourism and  
5 other economic development activities in rural areas, and (iii)  
6 programs and incentives in place in other states to promote  
7 historic barn restoration and preservation; the DCEO shall  
8 report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by  
9 December 1, 2008; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That in conducting its study the DCEO shall also  
11 consult with the Illinois Barn Alliance and any other private  
12 local historical, preservation, and community organizations  
13 engaged in promoting and preserving historic barns in their  
14 communities or counties; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution shall be  
16 presented to the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity,  
17 to the Director of Agriculture, and to the Director of the  
18 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.